



William Hargrave/The AggieLife

TO SERVE AND PROTECT

A&M offers professional bodyguard training program

By Jennifer Gressett

The Battalion

A 50-hour program in Texas A&M University's law enforcement division is training professionals in departments across Texas to save lives.

Located on A&M's Riverside campus, the Executive and Dignitary Protection Program is designed specifically for those already employed as personal security for private and corporate citizens. In order to provide complete protection, no applicants will be screened. In fact, for only \$325, hardly anyone has trouble getting in. Instructor Doug Smith said

the five-day program, which trains about 20 people per session, combines classroom instruction with hands-on applications which allow students to follow a fictitious official's itinerary.

Smith, who has been teaching since 1979, said his training stems from two sources: the military and law enforcement. "When our troops went to Saudi Arabia, I was the security training coordinator for the Royal Family Hospital," Smith said. "This allowed me to apply directly the things that I had been teaching for years."

However, while the majority of applicants seem to come from a military background similar to

"The greatest priority is to get the dignitary into a safe place."

-Sgt. Gary Bishop
CSPD

Smith's, he said people from a wide variety of organizations have completed the program. Some of the most prominent include Mary Kay Cosmetics, the Chicago Police Department, the U.S. Army and the Coast Guard.

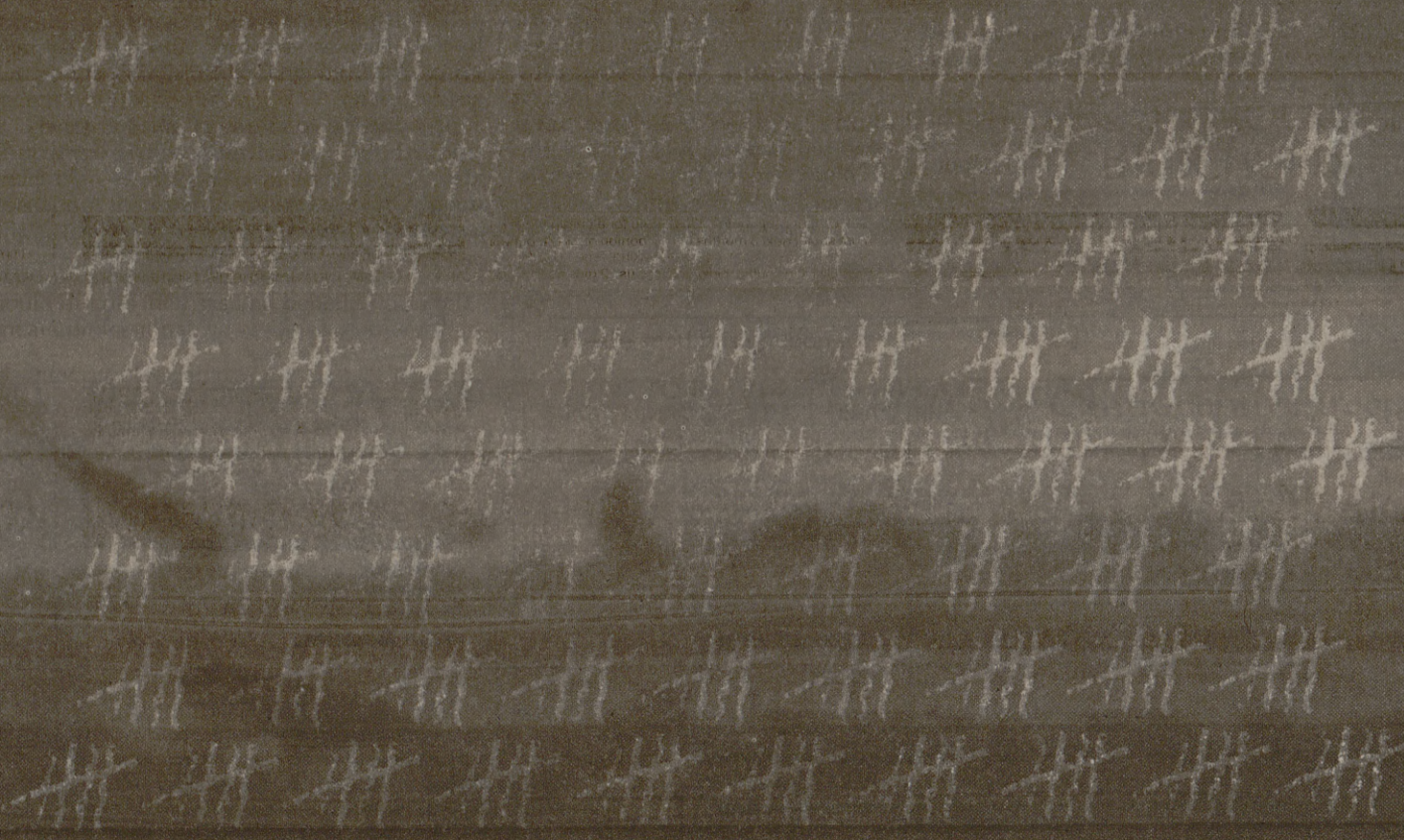
Sgt. Gary Bishop, of the College Station Police Department, completed the program when he joined the tactical team two years ago.

Bishop, who rated the program "top notch," said a completely different mental attitude has to be learned in order to protect someone else's life.

"The goal to protect changes from an assault mode to a 'retreat mode,'" Bishop said. "The greatest priority is to get the dignitary into a safe place."

Anyone interested in the program is invited to apply for the next course, which will take place May 16, at the Riverside campus. All applicants must be employed as personal security for private or corporate citizens. For more information, call the law enforcement division at 6593.

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